South Fork Flathead Watershed
Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation Program
Final Environmental Impact Statement

Responsible Agency: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Cooperating Agencies: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (FS) and State of Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (MFWP) Department

Title of Proposed Project: South Fork Flathead Watershed Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation Program

State Involved: Montana

Abstract: In cooperation with MFWP, BPA is proposing to implement a conservation program to preserve the genetic purity of the westslope cutthroat trout populations in the South Fork of the Flathead River drainage. The South Fork Flathead Watershed Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation Program constitutes a portion of the Hungry Horse Mitigation Program. The purpose of the Hungry Horse Mitigation Program is to mitigate for the construction and operation of Hungry Horse Dam through restoring habitat, improving fish passage, protecting and recovering native fish populations, and reestablishing fish harvest opportunities. The target species for the Hungry Horse Mitigation Program are bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, and mountain whitefish. The program is designed to preserve the genetically pure fluvial and adfluvial westslope cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki lewisi*) populations in the South Fork drainage of the Flathead River. To accomplish the goals, MFWP is proposing to remove hybrid trout from identified lakes in the South Fork Flathead drainage on the Flathead National Forest and replace them with genetically pure native westslope cutthroat trout over the next 10-12 years. Some of these lakes occur within the Bob Marshall Wilderness and Jewel Basin Hiking Area. Currently, 21 lakes and their outflow streams with hybrid populations have been identified and are included in this proposal. Other lakes may also be included as additional information is discovered. BPA funds would be used to implement this project. These activities would occur on lands administered by the FS.

BPA described and analyzed the proposed action and alternatives in a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) released in June 2004. BPA is considering the following alternatives:

- Alternative A: (No Action) Status Quo Management
- Alternative B: (Proposed Action) Fish Toxins-Combined Delivery and Application Methods
- Alternative C: Fish Toxins-Motorized/Mechanized Delivery and Application Methods
- Alternative D: Suppression Techniques and Genetic Swamping

This abbreviated final environmental impact statement (FEIS) contains the changes made to the DEIS, comments received on the DEIS, and BPA's written responses to the comments. The FEIS should be used as a companion to the DEIS, which contains the full text of the affected environment, environmental analysis and appendices. BPA expects to issue a Record of Decision on the proposed project in summer 2005.

For additional information, contact:

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The FEIS is also on the Internet at:
http://www.efw.bpa.gov/environmental_services/Document_Library/South_Fork_Flathead/.

For additional information on DOE NEPA activities, please contact Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance, EH-42, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue S.W., Washington D.C. 20585, phone: 1-800-472-2756 or visit the DOE NEPA Web site at www.eh.doe.gov/nepa.